United Nations ST/IC/2010/35

Secretariat

14 December 2010

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2011 competitive examination for associate translation support officers**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-2 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for associate translation support officers (formerly known as associate documentation officers; please refer to the generic job profile[1] for a description) in 2011, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 and ST/AI/2000/1, as amended by ST/AI/2003/1. The post of Associate Translation Support Officer is classified at the P-2 level.

2. The competitive examination for the post of Associate Translation Support Officer will tentatively be held on **16 March 2011** in New York, Geneva and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for the post of Associate Translation Support Officer will be filled. Successful candidates will be recruited from the roster to occupy posts in the Terminology and Reference Section of the Editorial, Terminology and Reference Service, Documentation Division, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in New York, as well as posts in related sections/units at other duty stations.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the Secretariat at the P-2 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as to qualified external candidates. For the purpose of this examination, staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations or separately administered funds or programmes and staff members whose service is limited to a particular mission or office of the United Nations are considered external applicants. Such applicants, if successful in the examination, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who

* Expiration date of the present circular: 31 December 2011.

[1] Available from http://iseek.un.org/LibraryDocuments/809-20080813110111396734.doc.

10-69866 (E) 301210

Please recycle

are successful and are selected from the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies as they occur in New York and at other duty stations.

4. Assignments are subject to rotation (mobility), and successful candidates may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations, according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 13 to 16 below.

5. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have a perfect command of English and an excellent working knowledge of two other official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish), one of which must be French or Spanish. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For that purpose, staff members should give a clear explanation on the P.11, or personal history profile (PHP), form of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed;

(b) Hold at least a three-year first-level university degree;

(c) Have at least five years of experience in referencing documentation, and/or work in a related field;

(d) Have sound knowledge of word-processing programmes and database applications.

6. In order to meet the Organization's need to recruit staff for language posts who will serve for a reasonable period of time before reaching retirement age, staff members who do not serve on a fixed-term appointment and who will have reached age 56 by the deadline for the submission of applications, **2 February 2011**, will not be eligible to sit for the examination. There is no age limit for full-time staff members serving on fixed-term appointments.

7. The requirement for a degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status, as stipulated in paragraph 5 (b) above, may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

8. All applicants should submit with their application a one-page essay in English of no more than 250 words explaining why they wish to work as an Associate Translation Support Officer at the United Nations. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. In instances where a large number of applications are received, the Board reserves the right to admit to the examination only the most qualified candidates on the basis of a review of the qualifications that are over and

above the minimum criteria set out in paragraphs 5 to 7 above and an assessment of the language skills demonstrated in the application. Examinees will be required to submit evidence of degrees, knowledge of languages and/or relevant experience prior to the interview. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final.**

9. The written examination, tentatively scheduled for **16 March 2011**, will consist of the following two parts:

Part 1:

(a) Questions dealing with the practical problems that may arise when one is working as a leader or a member of a team (1 1/2 hours);

(b) Questions relating to the process and methods of referencing documentation prior to translation, including research methodology (1 1/2 hours).

It should be noted that the first part is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in part 1 will have part 2 of their examination papers marked.

Part 2:

(a) Questions on United Nations documentation and the structure of the United Nations system (45 minutes);

(b) A summary, in English, of a text in French or Spanish, demonstrating comprehension of the content of the source text (30 minutes);

(c) A summary, in English or French, of a text in a language not yet used in the examination (Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish) (30 minutes).

10. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will not be permitted during the examination. Similarly, candidates may not use personal computers to prepare their papers.

11. On the basis of the results of the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected examinees to a competency-based interview. The Board will interview each examinee to assess whether she or he possesses the competencies required for the position. Examinees may also be required to take some additional short tests at the time of the interview. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, examinees who are invited for an interview should not assume that they will be automatically placed on a roster or offered an assignment.

12. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. All examinees will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are not subject to appeal. The Board does not release individual scores or results.

13. Candidates selected from the roster to fill a vacancy will be offered an appointment as Associate Translation Support Officer (formerly known as Associate Documentation Officer) for a trial period of two years. Successful candidates who receive an offer of appointment are encouraged to accept it, as declining it may affect their prospects of receiving a subsequent offer.

14. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 level will be assigned at their respective levels.

15. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level, subject to the availability of a post. After two years of satisfactory service on a fixed-term appointment, the candidate will be considered for an appropriate, open-ended appointment according to the rules and regulations in effect at the time of recruitment. This means that the candidate, in order to receive such appointment, will have to demonstrate within that time that he/she possesses the requisite qualifications and has rendered satisfactory service. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels, and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

16. In accordance with the needs of the service section, Associate Translation Support Officers may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

17. Staff members applying to take the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, together with a copy of the P.11, or PHP, form and the essay referred to in paragraph 8 above, not later than **2 February 2011**, by mail, fax or e-mail to:

2011 competitive examination for associate translation support officers
Examinations and Tests Section
Ms. Dominique Norz, CS-1116C
24-01 44th Road
Court Square Building 11th floor
Long Island City, New York 11101
Fax No.: 212 963 3683
E-mail: OHRM exam@un.org

Applications received after the aforementioned deadline will not be considered.

18. A study guide for the examination and an exam sample for the use of applicants may be accessed at the website of the Office of Human Resources Management.[1]

[1] http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/examin/welcome.htm

Application

2011 competitive examination for associate translation support officers

Index No.

Last name | Category | Level

First name | Male | Female

Date of entry on duty | Month | Year

Type of contract | Expiration date

Department/Office | Duty station

Room No. | Tel. extension | Fax No. | E-mail

Have you taken any United Nations language competitive examination? Yes [ ] in (year) [ ][ ][ ][ ] No [ ]

If yes, which examination(s)

What is your main language?[1] [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

Please complete an up-to-date PHP form and attach it to this application, together with the required essay.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to an official language of the United Nations as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature (When applying by e-mail, type the date and your name below)

Date _____ Signature _____

I have read information circular STIC 2010-35 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2011 competitive examination for associate translation support officers and am recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 13 to 16 of that circular.

Date _____ Signature _____

Essay

Please attach an essay of no more than 250 words explaining why you wish to work in the field of translation support at the United Nations.